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Senate

MARRIAGE TAX PENALTY RELIEF ACT OF 2000—Continued

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, negotiations are still ongoing with respect to the pending marriage tax penalty legislation. However, a resolution to the issue has not been worked out yet. It looks as if we are not going to be able to get it before the recess.

I call for the regular order with respect to H.R. 6 and send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the pending amendment to Calendar No. 437, H.R. 6, the Marriage Tax Penalty Relief Act of 2000:

Trent Lott, Kay Bailey Hutchison, Tim Hutchinson, Chuck Hagel, Larry E. Craig, Phil Gramm, Jesse Helms, Strom Thurmond, Rod Grams, Sam Brownback, Pat Roberts, Judd Gregg, Wayne Allard, Richard Shelby, Gordon Smith of Oregon, and Bill Frist.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that this cloture vote occur immediately following the vote scheduled at 12:15 on Tuesday, April 25, and the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, the vote will occur at approximately 2:25 p.m., or after the 2:15 vote.

On Tuesday, it is my hope that Members will allow me to vitiate the cloture vote and enter into a reasonable agreement that would allow swifter passage of the bill. Of course, I would like to continue to see if we can get agreement on alternatives or relevant amendments.

On yesterday, part of our problem in getting an agreement worked out was we didn't get the chance to even look at the amendments before the end of the day. But I am still hopeful we are going to be able to come up with something that would allow us to get an agreement and vitiate this cloture vote.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE GAS TAX

Mr. REID. Mr. President, before the majority leader leaves, I say respectfully that we appreciate his efforts to try to move legislation along. But I just want to make sure the record is clear. We were generous in offering the majority the opportunity to review our amendments. There is no requirement, of course, that we do so.

I also say to the leader that I think if we had started the marriage penalty legislation Monday or Tuesday of this week, we would be finished with it by now.

There may have been a lot of amendments offered, but the way we used to do things around here, we had lots and lots of amendments. In fact, there were a number of occasions when we had well over 100 amendments without any restriction of who offered them or what the subject matter was. And we completed the legislation.

I believe and predict if we go right to work on the marriage penalty legislation on the Tuesday when we return, we will complete it within 2 or 3 days, at the very most; maybe even in 2 days.

I think the majority leader should allow us—I say this not in a pejorative

way; we don't need to be allowed in the true sense of the word—to have the Senate work its will the way we have done it for a couple hundred years. I think he would be surprised at how much legislation we could move.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, it is my hope that over the next week or early the next week, I will be able to propose a list of amendments. I suggest that would be kind of in the realm of what we can agree to.

We have been looking at these various amendments. Some of them are clearly not going to be acceptable, and they probably could be easily tabled. Even though they are not relevant, some of them are meritorious. Our concern is, they have not been considered by the appropriate committee, whether it is Finance, or Agriculture. We are hesitant to have a vote on these and try to get Members to vote against them when, in fact, they may eventually want to be for them in a different forum.

I have an idea of how we might be able to work something out on this. I will have a suggestion on that before we come back a week from Tuesday.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I say to my friend I very much appreciate that. But I remind the Senator that the underlying bill skipped the committee process and came directly to the floor. I believe we should do as much as we can in the committee process. But the bill before us didn't get a vote in committee.

Mr. LOTT. The marriage tax penalty bill was considered by the Finance Committee, and we had amendments, including an alternative that was offered and seriously considered. The Moynihan alternative amendment has a lot of credibility to it.

Mr. REID. I apologize to the Senator. Maybe he didn't understand me. I didn't speak properly. What I should have said is, the legislation we spent a lot of time on this week—namely, the gas tax proposal—avoided the committee process.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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